



# JERRY PETROWSKI

## WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

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### State Senate Passes Proposed Mining Legislation

*Senator Petrowski adds amendments to protect the environment and local governments*

**MADISON...** The State Senate today passed a bill that would amend the laws regulating non-ferrous mining in the state. State Senator Jerry Petrowski (*R-Marathon*) voted for the bill only after negotiating the addition of several amendments with the bill authors and leadership in the State Assembly and Senate.

“I know people have a lot of concerns about allowing this type of mining in Wisconsin, and I share those concerns,” said Senator Petrowski. “As the bill gained momentum, I wanted to be sure that it provided solid protections both for the environment and for the taxpayers of our state.”

Senator Petrowski along with some of his Senate and Assembly colleagues negotiated several items that were incorporated into an amendment offered by Representative John Spiros (*R-Marshfield*) on the floor of the Assembly. The changes included:

- Ensuring that a mining company cannot avoid paying net proceeds taxes in Wisconsin by selling or transferring ore to an out of state company.
- Clarifying that the 10,000 ton limit on the size of a bulk sample applies to all of the material excavated, including overburden, rather than the size of the ore sample.
- Expanding on the original requirement in Senate Amendment 5 which now requires the DNR to determine whether they are reasonably certain that technology used at the proposed mine site will result in compliance with environmental regulations.
- Allowing a judge to suspend operations at a mine during a contested case hearing on a mining permit.
- Delaying the law’s effective date to be 6 months after publication rather than the day after; this will give local governments ample time to update their ordinances and ensure the DNR is prepared.

“The inclusion of these changes, in addition to the amendments added in committee, addressed my major concerns with the bill,” said Senator Petrowski. “The delayed effective date of the bill will ensure local governments have time to update their zoning and other ordinances to be prepared for any potential permit applications.”

“The amendment offered by Senator Petrowski significantly improved the proposed nonferrous mining bill,” said George Meyer, former DNR Secretary and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. “The amended bill along with the remainder of the current nonferrous mining law results in Wisconsin having one of

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the strongest nonferrous mining laws in the country and provides the DNR with the authority they need to assure that Wisconsin's natural resources will be protected."

Senator Petrowski has been in touch with local government leaders and last week sent a letter to the Wisconsin Counties Association and Wisconsin Towns Association asking them to create model ordinances for their members. This will ensure they have ordinances in place in the event someone wants to mine in their area. Marathon County Board Chairman, Kurt Gibbs was grateful for Petrowski's work to improve the bill. "I want to thank Senator Petrowski for his efforts to make changes to the bill and give local governments time to update local ordinances and plan for future needs."

"These types of mining operations can provide financial benefits for a community, but also carry inherent risks that must be considered," said Senator Petrowski. "By having an ordinance in place, local officials are better prepared to ensure that their concerns and needs are addressed if someone decides to pursue opening a sulfide mine or processing facility in their area."

The bill now awaits action by Governor Walker.

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